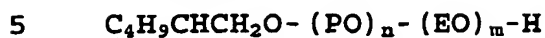


C L A I M S

1. An alkoxylate mixture, characterized in that it has the formula



where PO is a propyleneoxy unit, EO is an ethyleneoxy unit, n has an average value in the range 1.6-3.3 per 2-ethylhexyl group and m has an average value in the range 3.0-5.5 per 2-ethylhexyl group, and containing less than 1.5% by weight of unreacted 2-ethylhexanol; the said mixture being obtained by reacting 2-ethylhexanol in a first step with propylene oxide and in a second step the propoxylated mixture obtained with ethylene oxide.

2. Alkoxylate according to claim 1, characterized in that the amount of 2-ethylhexyl propoxylate is between 2 and 20% by weight.

3. Alkoxylate according to claim 1 or 2, characterized in that n has an average value in the range 1.6-2.4 and m has an average value in the range 3.6-4.6.

4. Alkoxylate according to claim 1, 2 or 3, characterized in that n has an average value in the range 1.8-2.3 and m has an average value in the range 3.6-4.6.

5. Alkoxylate according to claim 1, 2, 3 or 4, characterized in that the molar ratio between ethylene oxide and propylene oxide is in the range 1.6-2.6.

6. Method of producing an alkoxylate mixture, characterized in that 2-ethylhexanol is reacted with 1.6-3.3 moles of propylene oxide per mole 2-ethylhexanol in the presence of a propoxylation catalyst at a temperature from 110°C to 130°C in a first step where the total amount of propylene oxide is

allowed to react, whereupon the propoxylate mixture obtained, or the propoxylate mixture resulting after removal of unreacted 2-ethylhexanol, is reacted in a second step with 3.0-5.5 moles of ethylene oxide per mole 2-ethylhexanol propoxylate in the presence of an ethoxylation catalyst at a temperature from 60°C to 180°C.

7. Method according to claim 6, characterized in that the propoxylation catalyst is an alkaline catalyst selected from the group NaOH, KOH, NaOCH₃ and KOCH₃.

8. Method according to claim 6 or 7 characterized in that the ethoxylation catalyst is an alkaline catalyst selected from the group NaOH, KOH, NaOCH₃ and KOCH₃ or a narrow range catalyst selected from the group Brönstedt acids, Lewis acids and Ca(OH)₂.

9. Method according to claim 7 or 8, characterised in that the propoxylation and ethoxylation catalyst is KOCH₃.

10. Use of the alkoxylate mixture according to any of claims 1 to 5 for the cleaning of hard surfaces.